

plaudits of a more sympathetic posterity. The public will then decide whether this work is to be continued and completed ; and if it pass *in* the negative, I shall, without a pang, hurl my lyre to Limbo.

The reading public gave the would-be successor of Homer, Virgil, Dante, and Milton no encouragement, and with or without a pang he accordingly ' hurled his lyre to Limbo' ; though not, it would seem, at once. Thirty years later, when the poem had long been buried, the stress of political controversy brought it to the light again. In debate in the House of Commons in 1864 Disraeli had occasion to denounce certain well-known opinions of Mazzini's; whereupon Mr. Bright retorted that if what he had somewhere read was true Disraeli himself in one of his earlier works had propounded doctrines not dissimilar in tendency. The statement was at once denied and the denial accepted : but some lines of swelling rhetoric were subsequently quoted in the newspapers from the *Revolutionary Epick* and eagerly repeated to prove that in his youth the Conservative leader had advocated regicide. Disraeli might very well have followed his usual practice and laughed at the charge, the more so as the lines in question,¹ occurring in the rival pleadings before the throne of Demogorgon, could no more be held with justice to incriminate the author than Milton could be held responsible for every sentiment

¹ They have a double dramatic shelter in their place in the poem, being quoted by Lyridon as the utterance of the maiden Opinion. In the original edition the passage runs: —

Pharaoh's doom

Shall cool those chariot wheels now wet
with blood, And blessed be the hand that
dares to wave The regicidal steel that shall
redeem A nation's sorrow with a
tyrant's blood.

In. the edition of 1864 this became

Dark Pharaoh's doom

Shall cool your chariot wheels, and
hallowed be The regicidal steel that
shall redeem A nation's woe.

—Bk. II.

sect. 22. VOL. i — R